



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
Partners for Better Communities



Mobilizing Main Street Program Application

The Mobilizing Main Street (MMS) tier provides the framework for targeted organizational development support to Exploring Main Street (EMS) communities interested in pursuing Advancing Virginia Main Street (AVMS) designation. Please see the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) [Virginia Main Street \(VMS\) 2024 Program Guidelines](#) for more information.

Application Process and Instructions

Local programs aspiring to pursue Advancing Virginia Main Street (AVMS) designation should contact DHCD staff and discuss the viability of their community as a MMS community. If the community and DHCD determine that the community could support a Main Street program, the local program will submit an application for MMS status.

Applications for Mobilizing Main Street status must be submitted by 11:59 PM on Friday, November 8, 2024, and should be submitted on the forms provided by DHCD. All questions must be answered in the space provided. Applications not submitted accordingly may be disqualified.

Applications should be typed and transmitted as an electronic PDF file.

Attachments, such as maps, should fit a 8 1/2" x 11" page size.

Submit applications via email to mainstreet@dhcd.virginia.gov with the subject line including your community's name and "Mobilizing Main Street Application".

If you have questions, please contact Virginia Main Street at mainstreet@dhcd.virginia.gov.

Program Eligibility

Community candidates for MMS must meet the following criteria to be eligible for application. Candidates must:

- Be an active EMS community and organization. "Active" is defined as 1) participating in at least one VMS sponsored training or reaching out to their VMS program administrator at least once within the previous calendar year and 2) completing the year-end annual survey;
- Meet the guidelines for Main Street Districts (found on page 15 of the VMS 2024 Program Guidelines), which include pedestrian scale and orientation and have a critical mass of buildings and businesses;
- Have an existing 501(c)(3) nonprofit with a mission for commercial district revitalization, or an existing Main Street steering committee, consisting of a minimum of five (5) stakeholder members;
- Have local government support and commitment to Main Street as an economic development strategy; which could be a recent EMS or MMS resolution, financial contribution to Main Street program operations, and/or municipal letter of support; and
- Have attended the MMS How-to-Apply webinar or watched the recording.

Program Services and Requirements

Services to MMS participants are provided through DHCD's VMS program. Participants will work with DHCD staff to develop individualized work plans with the expectation of plan implementation and completion of program benchmarks. Participation in MMS is for up to two (2) years. During that time, DHCD staff and consultants will provide organizational development services to better prepare local programs for supporting a vigorous community revitalization program using [Main Street America](#)'s Main Street Approach™.

Mobilizing Main Street communities are required to document their program's progress as specified by DHCD. These programs must submit annual reporting that includes:

- Up to date contact information
- Main Street America Community Self-Assessment / Evaluation
- Monthly economic development data reporting beginning 07/01/2025, which may require commitment from local government to share data about public improvements, building permits, and business licenses
- Current downtown revitalization work plan, if applicable

Communities in the 2025-2026 MMS cohort have community-specific benchmarks to satisfy, which may include, but are not limited to:

- Completion of Board training
- Achieving incorporation and 501(c)(3) non-profit status, if applicable
- Developing market-based transformation strategies
- Developing a balanced and comprehensive work plan
- Developing a fund development strategy
- Identify boundaries for the Main Street service area
- Recruit appropriate human resources, both volunteer and professional

Schedule At-A-Glance

2025			
Date	Event	Format	Time
Jan 23	Cohort Kickoff & Orientation	In-person	10am - 3pm
Feb 20	Cohort Huddle: Nonprofit Structure & Fundamentals	Virtual	11am - 12:30pm
March 20	Cohort Huddle: Organizational Basics	Virtual	11am - 12:30pm
April 6-9	Main Street Now: Philadelphia <i>(optional)</i>	In-person	Full Days
April 24	Cohort Huddle: Building Institutional Relationships	Virtual	11am - 12:30pm
Week of May 12	VMS Regional Rev Up: Nonprofit Board Governance	In-person	Full Day
June 18	Cohort Huddle: Making the Case for Support	Virtual	11am - 12:30pm
July 24	Cohort Huddle: District Boundaries	Virtual	11am - 12:30pm
Aug 21	Cohort Huddle: Small Business Vitality	Virtual	11am - 12:30pm
Week of Sept 15	VMS Regional Rev Up: Placemaking & the Visual Experience of a Commercial District	In-person	Full Day
Oct	Technical Assistance Service: Market-Based Transformation Strategies	In-person	1-1.5 Days
Nov 20	Cohort Huddle: Community Context & Main Street America Accreditation	Virtual	11am - 12:30pm
Dec 18	Cohort Huddle: First Year Milestones & Preparing for Year Two Services	Virtual	11am - 12:30pm

2026*			
Date	Event	Format	Time
Jan/Feb	Technical Assistance Services: Annual Work Planning	In-person	4 Hours
March 19	Cohort Huddle: Grant Writing	Virtual	11am - 12:30pm
April 16	Cohort Huddle: Partnership Agreements with Localities	Virtual	11am - 12:30pm
Week of May 18	VMS Regional Rev Up: Topic TBD	In-person	Full Day
May/June	Technical Assistance Services: Fund Development	In-person	Full Day
June 18	Cohort Huddle: Emerging Issues	Virtual	11am – 12:30pm
July 16	Cohort Huddle: AVMS Designation How-to-Apply	Virtual	11am - 12:30pm
Aug 20	Cohort Huddle: BOOMS Building Inventory	Virtual	11am - 12:30pm
Week of Sept 14	VMS Regional Rev Up: Topic TBD	In-person	Full Day
Oct 9	AVMS Designation Applications Due	Virtual	11am - 12:30pm
Dec 17	Cohort Huddle: Capstone Celebration	In-person	Full Day

*Subject to revision

Applicant Information and Authorization

Locality:

Chief Administrator:

Chief Elected Official:

Name of Mobilizing Main Street Organization or Sponsoring Organization:

Designated Contact Person #1:

Phone:

Email Address:

Role (and Title, if applicable) within Mobilizing Main Street Organization or Sponsoring Organization:

Designated Contact Person #2:

Phone:

Email Address:

Role (and Title, if applicable) within Mobilizing Main Street Organization or Sponsoring Organization:

Designated Contact Person #3:

Phone:

Email Address:

Role (and Title, if applicable) within Mobilizing Main Street Organization or Sponsoring Organization:

Letter of Intent

Background:

The Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) seeks to provide comprehensive organizational development services over a two-year period to a cohort of Mobilizing Main Street (MMS) communities through the Virginia Main Street (VMS) program.

Goal:

DHCD will empower MMS communities to adopt a grassroots leadership approach and commitment to holistic preservation-based economic development to effectively build a strong organization and resilient downtown revitalization program that will have a lasting impact on their local economy and community as a whole.

Outcome:

MMS communities will be prepared to pursue and successfully maintain the responsibilities of State Designation in the Advancing Virginia Main Street (AVMS) tier and National Accreditation through Main Street America.

Responsibilities:

Virginia DHCD

- DHCD will utilize agency staff, partners and consultants that possess a wealth of experience and expertise to provide in-person and/or virtual training and technical assistance that effectively guides MMS communities in developing organizational capacity and preparing to undertake impactful community and economic development projects.
- DHCD will set the agenda(s) for training, develop content and summarize findings to outline next steps.
- DHCD will address organizational, economic and design improvements within each MMS community, while helping the cohort engage their respective communities, cultivate relationships, manage resources and develop business need gap programming to support the creation and sustainability of an entrepreneurial ecosystem.
- DHCD will provide competitive grant assistance as available to MMS communities to implement strategy-driven programming and/or community-based projects.

MMS Communities

- MMS communities agree to willingly participate for the full duration of the MMS program, concluding on December 31, 2026, and stay current on necessary work outlined within the program curriculum.

- MMS communities will actively engage the community and partner with other area organizations, when applicable, to leverage results and nurture meaningful relationships.
- MMS communities will make duly diligent efforts to publicize MMS-related training opportunities and ensure that partner organizations and/or community stakeholders participate in such events, when applicable.
- MMS communities will work alongside DHCD staff and/or consultants to secure space for in-person training events and coordinate logistics, i.e. food, technology, supplies, etc.
- MMS communities will send at least three (3) participants to all scheduled VMS training and MMS cohort gathering opportunities.
- MMS communities will stay current on homework assignments between trainings.
- MMS communities will communicate with the public and local media about their activities, achieving benchmarks, and additional accomplishments.
- MMS communities will complete monthly Economic Development Data reports as assigned in DHCD's online grant management system, CAMS.
- MMS local government agrees to provide data to enable the community to complete economic development data reports.

The applicant agrees to meet the requirements of a Mobilizing Main Street program as outlined in the Program Guidelines and will be eligible to receive Mobilizing Main Street services from DHCD, as long as the requirements are met. Should any applicant fail to meet program requirements, DHCD reserves the right to remove the community from the program.

Signatures:

Authorizing Agent from Local Government:

Name and Title (please print):

If applicable:

Private Sector Organization:

Name and Title (please print):

Please limit responses to no more than 500 words per text box (about one written page).

Community Characteristics

Questions focus on greater community and region.

1. Tell us the story of your downtown. Include the story of its founding and growth, as well as any stagnation and disinvestment.

2. What are your community's aspirations for participating in the Mobilizing Main Street program? Identify the community's major goals for the first three years of the program, including outcomes and results anticipated. Include physical changes, as well as citizen and business activities. It may help to think of this as the next chapter in the story of your downtown.

3. In order to implement these changes, who will you enlist as partners? Please list them and briefly state why they are important partners to have in support of your community's downtown revitalization efforts.

Proposed Main Street District Characteristics

Questions focus on the distinctive character of the proposed Mobilizing Main Street District.

4. Please attach a map of the proposed Main Street District.
5. List the proposed Mobilizing Main Street district's major assets and greatest strengths, including any special characteristics. What is working well for your district's economic opportunities? What do you value most about the district?

Historic Characteristics

Questions focus on the built environment of the proposed Main Street district.

6. Does your downtown have a local, state, or national Historic District? If so, provide the date of listing and a brief statement of significance and note any structures individually listed on the Historic Register.

7. Describe any major downtown structures that have been rehabilitated within the past five (5) years. Briefly state their historical use, as well as their current use if a purpose other than which it was originally built.

The Local Main Street Program

Questions focus on level of preparedness.

8. Provide a brief summary of your Main Street program's organizational efforts, including your current structure or stage of organizational development.

9. Please attach a copy of your organization's IRS nonprofit designation letter, if applicable.
10. Please provide a current list of the leadership for the Main Street organization's board or steering committee members. For each person, briefly indicate the following:
organizational position, local organization represented, and a mini bio to include relevant skills and planned contribution to the program.

11. What district or community revitalization activities or efforts have occurred in the past three (3) years? What were the outcomes of those efforts?

End of Application